



**PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
DRAFT MEETING MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING  
JANUARY 26, 2015**

**Board Members in Attendance: Vice-Mayor Gwen Wisler, Councilman Gordon Smith, Councilman Brian Haynes**

**Staff in Attendance: Gary Jackson, Cathy Ball, Jason Nortz, Shannon Tuch, Alan Glines, Todd Okolichany, Chris Corl, Robin Currin, Greg Shuler, Jaime Matthews, Vaidila Satvika, Melissa VanSickle**

**1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Councilman Smith motioned to approve the minutes, Vice-Mayor Wisler seconded. Minutes were approved unanimously.

**2. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**a. Consideration of ADU's for Short Term Rentals; Shannon Tuch**

After providing a background of the Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), short term rentals and homestays process, Ms. Shannon Tuch explained the prolonged discussion of allowing short term rentals in residential districts. In November, standards were put in place to reduce barriers and make homestays available to a wider group of people. Now, at City Council's request, staff is looking to expand the short term rentals to allow the use of ADUs. Upon Council's request, staff has clarified the process for proceeding with homestays in ADUs. The resident-manager would be allowed to occupy either unit, as long as they reside on the same property. Vice-Mayor Wisler discussed difficulties in regulating bedroom restrictions and asked if the wording could be changed to only allow the ADU be used for guest accommodations. Moving into a discussion about community impacts, Councilman Smith asked about the effects on the housing crisis and affordable housing. Aligning with previous direction from the HCD committee, Councilman Smith asked that staff collect more data around housing and neighborhood impacts before Council makes a decision. Members discussed the ability and timeframe for collecting such data.

It was recommended by the Committee that staff move this consideration forward to full Council with the wording change that only allows the ADU to be used for guest accommodations. Members also asked that staff provide more information concerning impacts on the community.

Public Comment:

Ms. Barbara Melton noted that neighborhoods do not want to be commercialized and that short term rentals have an impact on affordable housing. Ms. Melton provided examples from other communities and suggested talking with neighborhoods.

Ms. Grace Curry expressed opposition to the use of ADUs as homestays. Ms. Curry asked that the City waits until after the review process and then see what happens to the housing market.

Ms. Brandy Boggs thanked the City for working on improving homestays. Ms. Boggs believes adding ADUs for homestays would be beneficial to market needs and asked staff to look into creative solutions. Solutions to protect neighborhood integrity, such as a cap per neighborhood were suggested. Ms. Boggs also noted that running a homestay is not for everyone and only a select few will do them.

Ms. Jane Matthews, an advocate of affordable housing discussed issues surrounding short term rentals. Ms. Matthews expressed the need for affordable housing for citizens rather than for tourists. Ms. Matthews also urged staff to consider ways to create housing opportunities in neighborhoods.

Mr. Eric Shane discussed that he would like to have consideration of the government getting involved in private home matters.

Ms. Sarah Nai expressed the need for a reasonable and fair solution. Ms. Mai further discussed the support from members of the community and ways homestays can be beneficial.

Mr. John Farquhar applauded the decision to gather data. Mr. Farquhar volunteered a group of people to help in any way to develop a survey to gather data.

Mr. Dave Nutter noted that many people who stay in homestays and short term rentals could be future Asheville citizens.

Ms. Samantha Bowers expressed support of the most recent report and recommendations.

**b. Consideration of a Recommended Process for Haywood Street Property; Todd Okolichany**

Previously, Council directed staff to review alternatives for the public design process of the properties at Haywood Street, 37 and 33 Page Avenue. Mr. Todd Okolichany presented a map of these properties and described other benchmark projects throughout the country that were reviewed by staff. Mr. Okolichany further explained the process that other cities have used. Based on analysis, staff combined the elements found in those examples and developed a proposed process for the Haywood Street property. The proposal identified a competition that would award \$8,000 to prepare designs, have a public engagement process, a site visit, and a workshop. Include a public engagement program, site visit, and workshop. A stakeholder committee would be formed from a variety of community members to choose designs. Currently, staff is requesting approval of the process, direction on whether the 33 page property and Pritchard Park should be included in that process and approval for up to \$50,000 for project budgeting. Members expressed interest in the idea of using a design competition. Vice-Mayor Wisler suggested that staff form a stakeholder as soon as possible and allow them to identify a group that would manage a community visioning process for the property, then move forward with the suggested contest process. Per public comment, members discussed having the ADC manage the visioning process and the benefits that would follow from that decision. Members agreed that the process should include as much public involvement as possible.

It was recommended by members that staff move forward to full Council, begin forming a Stakeholder Committee, and present the idea to have the Asheville Design Center manage a visioning & public engagement process. Members also directed staff to include 37 Page Ave. and Pritchard Park in the process but wait for further staff analysis before determining the inclusion of the 33 Page Ave. property.

Public Comment:

Councilman Cecil Bothwell presented ideas for determining a process for the Haywood Street property. Councilman Bothwell highlighted four steps forward; the view from 2036, the design process, the time between and the matter of money.

Ms. Susan Hudon asked whether income or tax producing options are being discussed. Councilman Smith responded that there has not been official guidance from Council yet.

Mr. Adrian Vassallo spoke to public process and protocol asking that the Asheville Design Center (ADC) be involved with the visioning process, that staff include recommendations from the Downtown Commission, and that recommendations from citizens are respected. Mr. Vassallo also stated that the Downtown association would pledge 5,000 to that process.

Ms. Jane Matthews expressed interest in using the ADC as a vehicle for design input so that they can hire professionals and move the process forward.

Mr. Chris Joyell discussed the ADC's involvement with the community and suggested that at this stage, the ADC has the best credibility for dealing with this site. Mr. Joyell also discussed the work methods used at the ADC, stating that they work with transparency and without bias.

Mr. Dave Nutter asked that the ADC work with planning staff as a team and to have both public and nonprofit organizations be involved.

### **3. NEW BUSINESS**

#### **a. Evaluation of Thomas Wolfe Auditorium; Sam Powers**

The Evaluation of Thomas Wolfe Auditorium report is going to be released to the public and therefore staff wanted to provide the PED members with the chance to review. Due to time, further review of this item was moved to the next PED meeting.

#### **b. Consideration of Framework for UDO Modifications; Todd Okolichany**

Mr. Alan Glines presented staff considerations for amendments to the current downtown development review thresholds, expanding conditional zoning throughout CBD for Level III Projects, and expanding Council review of hotels in the CBD. There were 19 projects - 6 of them hotel, 8 residential and none rose to the level of 175,000, therefore not reviewed by Council. Along with the wording amendment process, staff recommended partnering with the Downtown Commission and have a community engagement process.

Members agreed to have staff move ahead with the three amendments and have a public engagement process coordinated with the Downtown Commission.

In 2010, design guidelines were approved and now staff would like to consider strategies to make design review mandatory. Moving forward, the options outlines by staff are to adopt with minimal adjustments or pursue a more complete study of the guidelines.

Members expressed interest in receiving feedback from the community on the design review guidelines and recommended staff to come back to PED with further information.

Public Comment:

Mr. Dave Nutter voiced support for the idea and that staff needs to balance mandatory design review with the compliance in a cooperative process.

Mr. Adrian Vassallo explained that design review is a complicated process so working with developers is a good thing but getting into detail will take a while. Mr. Vassallo suggested looking at what other communities have done to avoid an increase in the cost of building.

#### **4. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no additional public comment.

#### **5. ADJOURN**

Vice-Mayor Wisler adjourned the meeting at 2:35 p.m. without objection.

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